

Gossage's opening TMS to facilitate large-scale vaccine delivery, over 10,000 North Texans were immunized on multiple days at the Speedway's drive-through vaccine clinic.

Mr. Gossage's illustrious career has been punctuated by both commercial success and charitable service. I wish him all the best in his well-earned retirement and thank him for all he has done for our community and state.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF MELISSA F. JAMES ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

##### HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to take this opportunity to recognize Melissa F. James, who is retiring from the House of Representatives after 26 years of exemplary service.

Upon graduation from Oklahoma State University in 1994, Melissa relocated to Washington, D.C., to begin her career with the Honorable Tom Coburn, newly elected from her hometown in Oklahoma. Melissa's hard work, problem-solving skills, and can-do attitude quickly made her a valued member of Congressman Coburn's staff. After starting as a staff assistant, Melissa eventually was promoted to be Congressman Coburn's scheduler, a position she held until Mr. Coburn retired from the House in 2001.

Melissa remained in the House, next serving for 10 years as the scheduler and office manager to Congressman Todd Tiahrt of Kansas. In 2011, after Mr. Tiahrt's departure from Congress, Melissa joined the office of Congressman Randy Neugebauer of Texas. In her time with Mr. Neugebauer, Melissa frequently displayed a deft touch with difficult questions from both other staff and constituents. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a finer office representative than Melissa, who embodies the true spirit of public service. Melissa proved herself to be an irreplaceable member of every team on which she served, as demonstrated by the fact that she never left a Member's staff until the Member left the House.

After Congressman Neugebauer's retirement from the House in 2017, Melissa joined the Office of General Counsel (OGC) as its administrative director. Melissa took on new tasks and responsibilities with aplomb and immediately became an indispensable part of the OGC team. It would be impossible to list all of her contributions, but among them, she has taken a lead role with regard to all aspects of office management and administration, including with the office budget and computer systems. During her time with OGC, Melissa demonstrated herself to be dedicated to serving Members, Officers, and employees of the House, remarkably trustworthy and utterly fearless when faced with novel, sensitive, and difficult matters. Melissa's unwavering resolve and commitment to the House and OGC was always evident, as was her ability to find a solution to seemingly any problem.

Beyond her incredible dedication to her work, Melissa has been a kind and thoughtful coworker to all, treating everyone from the Members to the mail-carriers with the utmost respect and kindness. As scores of current

and former colleagues can attest, Melissa is a true joy to work with, and is someone who makes the workday better for everyone with whom she comes into contact. It is no exaggeration to say that she has become family to many over her years on the Hill. Melissa is always eager to share her passion and contagious enthusiasm for golf—and really any sport in which an alum of her cherished OSU Cowboys (Go Pokes) plays—so much so that anyone who knows her soon becomes a fan as well. Melissa's cheerful and welcoming presence on the Hill will be sorely missed by all those who had the pleasure of working with her.

It will be hard to imagine the House without Melissa. Every day for the past 26 years, Melissa has served the House with unmatched dedication and tenacity. Regardless of the task before her, Melissa will always find a way to accomplish it—a quality that will continue to serve her well in her future endeavors. On behalf of the Office of General Counsel and the entire House community, I thank Melissa for her decades of service and wish for her a joyous and relaxing retirement among her many friends and family in Oklahoma.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JAMES ALKIRE

##### HON. MARK DeSAULNIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mr. DESAULNIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of James "Jim" Alkire.

Jim was born in West Virginia in 1934. When he was 10 years old, Jim's family relocated to Arizona where he spent the rest of his childhood and attended the University of Arizona. In 1957, he was drafted into the United States Army and served two years of stateside duty. Jim then returned to his education and graduated from Texas Western College. From there, he obtained a master's degree in public administration from the University of Pennsylvania.

After completing his education, Jim pursued a career in public service. He served as the director of finance and assistant to the city manager in Highland Park, Illinois, and then the city manager of Centralia, Illinois. In 1970, Jim and his family made a final move to Pleasant Hill, California, where he served as the city manager until retiring in 1987. Jim is remembered as an outstanding leader who fostered positive working environments.

In his personal life, Jim married his wife, Margaret, in 1960, and the couple had three children. Jim was a long-time Rotarian in Illinois and California and joined the Pleasant Hill Rotary Club in 1970, where he participated in many years of invaluable community service. Jim was also an emeritus member of the Pleasant Hill Community Foundation and active member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. He coached baseball for his sons, listened to jazz music, and was known for his sense of humor. In retirement, Jim and Margaret traveled the world together.

Sadly, Jim passed away in April of this year. Please join me in honoring Jim for his leadership and many contributions to our community.

#### RECOGNIZING STATE SENATOR JIM BEALL OF CALIFORNIA

##### HON. NORMA J. TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, June 11, 2021*

Mrs. TORRES of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my friend, California State Senator Jim Beall. After more than 40 years of dedicated public service to Santa Clara County, Jim recently retired at the end of his term.

As a Santa Clara County native, Jim spent his formative years in San Jose as one of ten children. He lived in a home where money was tight and worked in the crop fields as a teenager, learning the values of a hard day's work, self-reliance, and giving back to his community. Jim put his passion for public service to work at the age of 24 when he served on the San Jose City Planning Commission, and at age 28, he became the youngest person ever elected to the San Jose City Council. As a council member, Jim worked to fix and update the county's infrastructure and expand affordable housing. His role in creating San Jose's Housing Department was key to the development and growth of the city he loved serving. Jim's efforts to bring new and updated access to the San Jose Community as chair of the Santa Clara County Traffic Authority led him to be the first in California to successfully pass a half-cent sales tax increase to raise funds to help build Highways 85, 101, and 237. Later as a member of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Jim followed through on his commitment to increasing access to healthcare and mental health services and worked with his colleagues to pass the Children's Health Initiative, which ensured every child in the county had health insurance.

Jim continued his public service as a member of both the California State Assembly and California State Senate. Jim passed major infrastructure bills including SB1, one of the largest infrastructure bills in California's history which created over 150,000 new jobs and repaired and updated roads, and SB 595 which supported regional transportation projects in the San Francisco Bay Area. He also worked on a number of public safety bills including passing Audrie's Law, a bill that empowered survivors of sexual assault by reforming juvenile sexual assault statutes. As a lifelong advocate for foster youth, Jim authored first-in-the-nation legislation to extend foster youth benefits to more young people and passed college access bills that have led to higher graduation rates of foster youth. Jim also championed the cause to improve mental health treatment by authoring several bills that increased access to such services and played a critical role in ensuring California healthcare plans included mental health and substance abuse disorder treatment. Through his final term in the California State Senate that ended in December 2020, Jim has worked tirelessly and selflessly for his community and the list of his legislative accomplishments goes on and on.

I was lucky to serve with Jim in both the California State Assembly and in the State Senate. I was always impressed by his thoughtfulness and dedication to improving his community and state. As he moves on to a